

LETTER  
OF THE  
SECRETARY OF WAR,  
COMMUNICATING.

*In compliance with a resolution of the Senate of the 10th of May, 1866, a report by the Chief of Ordnance, relative to the present condition of the public works at Harper's Ferry.*

JULY 2, 1866.—Read, ordered to lie on the table and be printed.

WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington City, June 28, 1866.*

SIR: In compliance with the Senate's resolution of May 10, 1866, requesting the Secretary of War to communicate information as to the present condition of the public works at Harper's Ferry, to what extent and for what purpose they are used, and whether they might not be sold or otherwise disposed of without detriment to the public good, I have the honor to transmit herewith a report by the Chief of Ordnance of May 14, 1866, containing the information desired.

Very respectfully, sir, your obedient servant,

EDWIN M. STANTON,  
*Secretary of War.*

Hon. L. F. S. FOSTER,  
*President of the Senate.*

ORDNANCE OFFICE, WAR DEPARTMENT,  
*Washington, May 14, 1866.*

SIR: In answer to the resolution of the Senate, requesting information in regard to the property of the United States at Harper's Ferry, West Virginia, I have to report:

The government owns at that place about seventy-five acres of improved land, and has the right of cutting wood on a large tract of unimproved land on the south side of the Shenandoah river. On the improved land there are twenty-five dwelling-houses, a powder magazine, a public stable, a repair shop, nine storerooms, and the ruins of the former armory shops. Eighteen of the dwelling-houses are in fair condition; the residue, as well as the main shops of the old armory, have been much injured during the war, and are in bad order. The powder magazine, stable, repair shop, and storerooms are all in good condition.

This department is now using, for the purposes of an ordnance depot for the storage and preservation of munitions of war, the powder magazine, five store-

rooms, the repair shop, and a dwelling-house for quarters for the military store keeper. This ordnance depot is only required for a temporary purpose, and will be broken up as soon as the supplies now stored there can be transferred to the arsenals.

Harper's Ferry cannot, in my opinion, be ever again used to advantage for the manufacture of arms; the retention of the property of the United States at that place is not necessary or advantageous to the public interest, beyond the temporary use of so much as may be required for the ordnance depot; and I recommend that, as soon as that depot can be broken up, all the public land, buildings, and other property there, be sold, and the proceeds of the sale be applied to the construction of the armory in the west, as now authorized and directed by law to be established.

The resolution of the Senate is returned herewith.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

A. B. DYER,

*Brevet Major General, Chief of Ordnance.*

Hon. E. M. STANTON,

*Secretary of War.*